COMRADES *of the* MIST

AND OTHER RHYMES OF THE GRAND FLEET

LIEUT. COMDR. EUGENE E. WILSON
U. S. NAVY

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COMRADES OF THE MIST

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and other

Rhymes of the Grand Fleet

by

LIEUT. COMDR. EUGENE E. WILSON
U. S. NAVY

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DEDICATION.

To our "Comrades of the Mist"—the officers and men of the British Grand Fleet, this volume is affectionately dedicated.

E. E. W.

FOREWORD

Many of the verses in this volume appeared first in the weekly newspaper of the United States Ship ARKANSAS at a time when she was attached to the Sixth Battle Squadron of the Grand Fleet. This squadron was under the command of Rear Admiral Hugh Rodman, U. S. N., familiarly known as "Old AC6" (Admiral Commanding Sixth Battle Squadron), who flew his flag on the NEW YORK. The remaining ships were the WYOMING, FLORIDA and TEXAS, making a crack squadron of America's best. This squadron constituted one of the units of the Grand Fleet under Admiral Sir David Beatty, R. N. and shared with the British the long vigil in the North Sea. When not steaming on one duty or another, the fleet was based either at Scapa Flow, in the Orkney Islands, or on Rosyth, in the Firth of Forth, Scotland.

One of the most difficult problems of the whole campaign consisted in keeping the crews fit in spite of the enforced long stay aboard ship. The weekly paper, the ARKLIGHT, was one of the sources of amusement for all hands. This little sheet was unique in that practically everything published was written on board. None of the contributions were signed and the authors were often unknown even to the staff. In order that it might be sent through the mails the paper had to comply with the censorship regulations, yet it

was possible for one who knew how, to read between the lines and guess what was going on. Perhaps the best indication of the character of the paper is found in the heading of one of the issues which reads as follows:

THE ARKLIGHT.

Founded sometime A. D. 1918.

Published weekly on board the U. S. S. ARKANSAS

Our motto:

"Distemper Intemus," meaning *"We should worry."*

Subscription Rates:

One year.....Nothing
Six months.....Nothing and a half
Three months .....Less than nothing

We print no liquor or patent medicine advertisements. The ARKLIGHT has the greatest unpaid subscription of any newspaper east of Greenwich and north of Fifty-five.

All manuscripts must be submitted with the authors full name. We cannot publish articles signed "K. C. B.", "B. L. T." etc.

Entered at the ARKANSAS postoffice as the worst class of mail matter.

PASSED BY CENSOR.

In collecting these verses, the names of the authors have been ascertained and are given

under the titles where possible. After months in the North Sea I feel capable of assuming the responsibility for the others no matter how reckless it may seem.

It is hoped that these rhymes, by reflecting some of the spirit of the Grand Fleet, may help to bring out of its self-imposed obscurity Britain's splendid "Silent Service."

E. E. W.

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COMRADES OF THE MIST

COMRADES OF THE MIST

Where the long bridge spans the mighty Forth,
Twixt towering headlands bold,
And thin white fog drifts silently,
Dank and grey and cold,
There lean grey ships at anchor ride,
Their guns by the salt breeze kissed.
Ah, they are the flower of Britain's power,
Our Comrades of the Mist.

When the North Wind whipped the frothing sea
And drove the biting spray;
When the great fleet smashed the towering wave
And sped upon its way;
When the mighty ships rolled heavily,
And driving rain squalls hissed,
How proud were we to sail the sea,
With our Comrades of the Mist.

Down through the years that are to come,
When we've gone our several ways,
To the farthest corners of the earth,
That bask in the sun's warm rays,
We'll dream of the days when we were part,
Of Britain's strong mailed fist—
When we kept the sea and nations free,
With our Comrades of the Mist.

CHEER-O!

The British have a funny word,
Cheer-O!
At first it seemed a bit absurd—
Cheer-O!
They said it when we joined the Fleet,
They say it now when e're we meet,
Till smilingly we all repeat,
Cheer-O!

They say it when they take a drink—
Cheer-O!
They say it in their sleep, I think—
Cheer-O!
They'll say it when they meet the Hun,
They'll fire it with the opening gun,
They'll sing it when the battle's won—
Cheer-O!

HERE AND THERE

While "Over Here"
We spent a year
And didn't think it fair,
That all the boys
And all the noise,
Were going "Over There,"

In old Base Two,
We oft were blue,
Because we vegetated,
And did our bits
A riding jits,
To towns we always hated.

But now we sing
A different thing,
And no one has a care,
Since "Over There"
Is over here
And "Over Here"
Is there.

DEEP STUFF

I'm a hardened son of the briny deep,
  Barnacled, hairy and mean.
I'm the hardest, toughest, ugliest cuss,
  That anyone ever has seen.
And yet there's a mystery even for me—
  Solved I'm afraid it never will be;
Say, what the Heck does a seaman see?

I've sailed with old seadogs, captains and such,
  So mean they could get their own goats,
The kind that drinks long from the little brown
      jug
  And ships with a hard line of boats.
And yet there's a riddle—say, give me a tip
  About these old guys that's so fond of their
      nip;
Now what the Heck does a skipper skip?

And as for those soft-fingered, cotton-mouthed guys
We carry around on our craft,
To pound the typewriters and trim the Exec.,
And pull what they can in their graft,
Believe me, I don't think I ever will know,
No matter how far on the briny I go—
Now what the Heck does a yeoman yeo?

What the Heck does a yeoman yeo?
I ask you that as we sail along;
What the Heck does a bos'n bo?
Just add that verse to your little song;
What the Heck does a cutter cut?
What does a whaler whale?
What the Heck does the anchor-watch watch?
And the modern sailor sail?
Answer me these, you raw recruit
And you'll be the "Salt" while I'll be the "Boot."

THE GOB

What a name for any man
To saddle on himself, you say,
And yet its choice exemplifies,
The sailor's own peculiar way.

He'd like to make you think him hard,
And so he swaggers in his walk,
Injecting salty epithets
Into his loud sea-going talk.

And, frosty mornings, up on deck,
He'll push a rasping holystone,
Barefooted, in his undershirt—
And grumble in an undertone.

Because the Bos-n bawls him out,
For banging up his neighbor's toes,
When that young man has wet him down,
With water from a fire hose.

Or on the bridge when in the cold,
Of driving snow and freezing spray,
He stands his chilly hours of watch
Yet always seems to find some ray

Of sunshine and of happiness—
The fiercer blows the raging gale,
The more he seems to like the night —
It keeps his life from getting stale.

And down below he'll wield the bar
And swing the heavy ash pan hoe
And buck the flaming roaring fires,
As if they were a deadly foe.

Because he dearly loves the fight
And never seems to get enough—
I think he mostly loves the sea,
Because it's fierce and treats him rough.

And yet it' all a pose with him,
He isn't really hard at all,
But just a manly, upright boy,
Who'll answer to your every call

With every thing that in him is—
By day or night it's just the same —
He'll stand behind you to the last,
If you will only play the game.

THE GOB

Funny name and funny ideas,
Has your salty friend the gob,
But he'll die for you a smiling
If you're "white" and on the job.

POOR FISH!

LIEUTENANT M. A. LEE, U. S. N.

How lively is the silent clam!
    He never really gives a damn;
And there, my dear, his virtue lies,
    At least to my adoring eyes.

Behold, my child, the little fish,
    Exuding perfume on the dish;
Not always was his life work food,
    With stuffings and with bones endued,
But once he swam the deep blue sea,
    Nor gave a damn for you or me;
Until one day, with famished look,
    He bit for food and got the hook.

POOR FISH!

Behold the all-enormous whale—
    One-third is fish, the rest is tail—
And yet the former, so they say,
    Makes all the rest get under way.
Hast seen him spout vast seas of water—
    A habit which he hadn't oughter?
It was a whale which Jonah used,
    When on the oceans deep he cruised.
The story's good, but Jonah's exit,
    For me at least completely wrecks it.

Oh see, my child, the ugly shark!
    His ways are morbid, dank and dark,
And all the fishes of the sea,
    Turn on their tails and straightway flee,
Because he has an appetite,
    Which keeps him moving, day and night,
Nor does he, when he spies a man,
    Make the best exit that he can—
But rather, in his playsome way,
    Considers man a mere entree.

I like to think upon the germ,
    And then compare it with the worm.
The likeness I will show next time,
    For now, enough that they will rhyme.

POOR FISH

Just think with what palatial ease,
    The little rascal spreads disease—
One minute born, the second off,
    To give some child the whooping cough.
It turns around and at you jumps—
    First thing you know you've got the mumps.
If married, with what little trouble,
    A germ can find its life-like double,
And quicker than you'd bat an eye—
    The dern thing's got an alibi!

MAIL-O!

ENSIGN HUTCHISON, U. S. N.

Coaling, Coaling, Coaling,
Our work is never done;
The drills are long, the life's all wrong,
The rain has drowned the sun.

Mail-O! Mail-O! Mail-O!
Letters for the ARK;
This life for me! A man at sea,
Finds wars like this a lark.

DER TAG

LIEUT. H. E. CRESSMAN, U. S. N.

When eau de cologne comes from limberger
cheese,
When the jelly fish swallows the whale;
When kangaroos roost on gooseberry trees
And grasshoppers feed upon quail;

When the laws of gravity cease to exist
And the rivers all run up hill;
When young Americans no more enlist
To shoot at "All Highest Bill";

When bumblebees whistle "Die Wacht Am
Rhine";
When feathers are found upon frogs
When the mule is blessed with a voice divine,
And humming birds prey upon hogs;

When submarines swim through the air at
night;
When powder won't burn in our guns—
Then maybe our allies will give up the fight
And the world will be ruled by the Huns.

THE CLINKER

When the ship drives on through the tumbling sea,
And speeds through the darkest night,
With the steady wash of turning screws,
That drive her in her flight;
And you, in your bunk or up on deck,
Have naught to do but ride,
Do you ever think of the watch below,
Have you ever thought what drives her so,
Or have you never tried?

Do you ever picture the turning wheels
Or flashing rods of steel,
Or hissing steam or scorching heat,
Way down there near the keel;
Do you ever think of the black stoke-hold,
And its sweating, straining crew;
Do you ever think of the flaming bed,
In that gaping maw that must be fed,
Or is it strange to you?

THE CLINKER

Do you ever picture the dusty "Heave"
  Who toils in the bunkers' gloom,
Where the air is dead and clogged with dust,
  Mid silence of the tomb?
Do you pity the clinker who struggles alone
  With no complaining sound?
Well, if you do, don't say it aloud,
  He wants no pity—that boy is proud,
He's making the wheels go 'round.

THE NAVAL OFFICERS' RUBAIYAT

LIEUTENANT M. A. ("OMAR") LEE, U. S. N.

Wake! For the watch which scatters into flight,
The sleep belonging to the field of night,
Calls; and for you no difference exists,
And you must work, whether in dark or light.

Before the phantom of false morning-tide,
Me thought a quartermaster's striker cried:
"When the thermometer is ten below—
Why nods the drowsy officer inside?"

The morning orders underneath a hatch
A cup of coffee, a piece of toast, a match,
With naught to strike it on because the box
Is wet with rain and therefore will not scratch.

THE NAVAL OFFICERS' RUBAIYAT

The Chief of Bureau writes and having writ
  Moves on; nor all your record or your wit
Shall lure him back to cancel half a line
  Or change your orders in the slightest bit.

Yon rising moon that looks on us again,
  How oft hereafter shall she wax and wane;
How oft hereafter shall we rise and look
  For her, to see naught but a cloud of rain.

But when some day from navies I will pass
  And bid the rules and regs. all go to grass
Then in my joyous errand will I say,
  'Twas good; sh—gif me—hic—another glass.

THE DEAD LINE

The Nth Division part of the ship
Extends from here to there;
The Mth Division then begins,
And goes—oh, anywhere.

The Nth Division scrubs the paint
Up to the limiting point.
The Mth Division then begins,
And scrubs its little joint.

But at the place where M begins
And N comes to a stand,
The dirty Dead Line finds its place,
As bleak as No Man's Land.

THE DEAD LINE

For those of us who moralize,
At the ways of mice and men,
The Dead Line in its squalidness,
Is well within our ken.

For he who would succeed in life,
And put all foes to rout,
Is he who does more than his bit,
And wipes the Dead Line out!

THE SKY GUN

They put him up high to be close to the sky,
And shoot down the enemy planes;
He was just a young kid and yet what he did,
He had to do most with his brains.

Way up near the stack where the smoke turned him black
And cinders flew into his eye,
There wasn't much fun on the long, weary run,
With the mist and the rain scudding by

But he stood to the job like a good little gob,
Though he shivered a lot in the cold.
And why should we know, all snug down below,
'Twas a lad hardly twenty years old?

Yet when on the beam he sighted the gleam
Of a periscope breaking the sea,
Did he wait for "Control"?—No—he shot on the roll,
And I guess that he saved you and me.

For he kept after Fritz and knocked him to bits,
And sent him to old Davy Jones,—
Ere we mustered on deck for a look at the wreck—
'Twas the kid who had saved all our bones.

So we hand it to him for his pep and his vim,
And for getting old Fritz on the run.
It's a nice thing to know that you're safe down below,
When the kid mans the little sky gun.

SMOKES

LIEUTENANT H. E. CRESSMAN, U. S. N.

Tobacco is a filthy weed,
I like it.
They say it fills no normal need,
I like it.
It makes you old,
It makes you lean,
It takes the hair
Right off your bean,
It's the worst dam stuff I've ever seen,
But—*I like it!*

THE CENSOR

LIEUTENANT J. VANCE, U. S. N. R. F.

Buried 'neath oceans of home-going mush;
Wading through pages of lovey-dove slush;
Killing his eyes with the humble gob's gush,
Is the censor.

Laura Jean Libby would seem tame to him;
Vows of Pelleas are lacking in vim;
Romance's star becomes suddenly dim
To the censor.

Patience is strained as he toils at his job,
Painfully reading the poor sailor's sob;
Doing his bit he restraineth the mob;
Does the censor.

THE CENSOR

Sliding through life, unthanked and unsung.
Frequently cursed and strangely unhung,
From kegs of good dope always pulling the bung,
Is the censor.

But when "quarters" sound from the heavenly land,
And pearly gates ope' for our immortal band,
Saint Peter will say as he puts out his hand,
"Welcome censor!"

WHEN THE GRAND FLEET GOES TO SEA

The low scud flies across the skies,
The rain beats hard on deck;
The white-caps pelt the armor belt,
The tide-rips roar in the neck.
The white mist sweeps in flying sheets,
And dank is the speeding spray;
The black hulks loom in the drizzling gloom,
Two cable lengths away.

There comes a rift as the fog banks lift
To the height of the turret tops;
The sirens scream, a searchlight beam,
Swings dead ahead and stops.
And in its light there sweep in sight
Destroyers steaming free;
The speeding craft glide swiftly aft,
And onward out to sea.

WHEN THE GRAND FLEET GOES TO SEA

The sun breaks through and reveals the blue,
Behind the hovering grey;
The rain squalls slack, the wind shifts back,
And drives the mist away.
There on the beam comes now a gleam,
As ships turn sharp about,
Swing to the tide and swiftly glide—
Light-Cruisers standing out.

Off on the bow the shore line now,
Glows green in the morning light
Against grey stack and turret back,
And masthead's towering height.
The huge ships turn, and down astern
Are lost in the haze alee;
As propellors sing and rudders swing—
Battle Cruisers out to sea.

The moist wind dies, the clearing skies
Shed warmth on the placid bay;
The lazy steam from off the stream
Drifts upward and away.
With hulls unseen, but topmasts lean,
Thrust out above the white,
The *Battleships* have left their slips,
And slowly pass from sight.

WHEN THE GRAND FLEET GOES TO SEA

The sun comes out and puts to rout
The last of the vapory screen;
And there behold twixt headlands bold
No sail or craft is seen,
But far away on horizon grey
A myriad speck drifts on,
Till a deep smoke pall obscures it all,
And the Battle Fleet is gone.

Oh, wondrous hour! Oh, mighty power!
Oh, work of mortal man!
Your cause is just—guard well your trust,
As only real men can.
Stand fast for right throughout your fight
To keep the ocean free;
We stand or fall, we stake our all,
When the Grand Fleet goes to sea.

SEA-GOING MOTHER GOOSE

FROM THE "ARK'S" NURSERY

Wilhelm had a little sub,
- He sent it out to sea,
And told it to go lie in wait
Where ships were sure to be.

It ran across the ARK one day,
We nailed it to the mast;
Poor Wilhelm hasn't many left,
He loses them so fast.

Sing a song of six-pence
Draw your monthly money.
It will be in pounds and pence,
And won't the stuff look funny?

When the roll is opened
Hear the sailors moan—
"I'd rather have cigar coupons,
They give away at home!"

SEA-GOING MOTHER GOOSE

Ten little submarines, all new and fine;
Depth charge got one, then there were nine.

Nine little submarines, exponents of hate;
Sky-gun potted one and then there were eight.

Eight little submarines, floating under heaven;
Sea-plane dropped a bomb and then there were seven.

Seven little submarines, up to naughty tricks;
One fouled a cruiser's wheels and then there were six.

Six little submarines, didn't look alive;
One lost its bearings and then there were five.

Five little submarines headed for the shore;
One hit a big rock and then there were four.

Four little submarines in a heavy sea;
One was flooded through a hatch, then there were three.

Three little subamrines, getting mighty few;
One got in a mine field and then there were two.

Two little submarines, playthings of the Hun;
Fritz got tangled in the nets and then there was one.

One little submarine feeling mighty sore;
Skipper blew the damn thing up, and now "there ain't no more."

THE GUNS

With muzzles thrust from turret fronts,
The long guns grimly peer,
And search for distant objects,
On the far horizon clear;
Twelve steel-grey lengths that silently
Yet swiftly swing as one—
They halt, then hold relentlessly,
A spot beneath the sun.

A sharp command—a clash of steel,
The shells go rumbling in;
A thud of thumping powder bags,
Machinery's cranking din—
Then silence, as the muzzles lift
And point into the sky;
One hears the blood pound throbbingly,
And then the word "Stand-by!"

THE GUNS

A flash, a roar, the turrets whip,
The mighty guns recoil;
The quivering ship sags drunkenly,
The nearby waters boil;
The guns spring back "to battery."
The brown smoke rolls o'erhead,
And dancing heat waves shimmer,
Where the singing shells have sped.

Then on the far horizon where
The straining eyes can see,
The hostile lofty topmasts,
Telling where the hulls must be—
There one gazing, waiting, breathless,
Sees a flash against the blue,
And a burst of flying wreckage,
As the salvo crashes through.

Oh, the guns, the smoking grim guns,
So submissive in our hand,
Though they do our every bidding,
Though they yield to each command,
Yet they strike in sudden anger,
Dealing death and wound and woe,
Unto him who in aggression,
Puts to sea as freedom's foe.

SEA-SURGERY

Two keen destroyers sailed one day,
And sped into a battle—
The ZEUS and the NUBIAN,
Two jolly little craft—
But when the smoke had cleared away
And guns had ceased to rattle,
The one was riddled forward
And the other ruined aft.

So they towed the halves remaining
To a floating dock hard by—
The ZEUS and the NUBIAN
Two badly battered boats—
Where they sewed the parts together
In the twinkling of an eye,
And made the good ship ZUBIAN
The smartest craft that floats.

HEADS UP!

When the sea runs high and the rain is cold,
And the sharp wind cuts your face,
When you're on watch on a five-inch gun
In an unprotected place;
When your feet are numb, your hands are stiff,
Your clothes are freezing wet,
Perhaps you'll rue the luckless day
You entered in the Navy's pay,
And yet, young man, that's not the way.
Heads up!

When you've been cussed because you failed,
Although you've done your best,
And had to stand and take the bumps
For the errors of the rest;
Or guessed all wrong on an even chance
And hard words come your way,
Perhaps you'll wish that you were back
In civil life and the beaten track,
And yet, young man, you're off the track.
Heads up!

HEADS UP!

When down on watch in the hot stoke-hold
With the ship at topmost speed,
When the hungry boilers roar for coal
And call on you to feed;
When the scorching heat saps all your strength,
And forced draft wears you down,
You long for just one moment's rest
And yet you've got to stand the test;
Conceal your weakness with a jest—
Heads up!

Then on the day when the lookout sights
The Hun on his enterprise
When his turret guns belch forth their shell
And flame leaps to the skies;
If one gets home and bursts near you,
To spread its sudden death,
They'll never get you on the run,
You'll fight back hard and serve your gun;
You'll cry until the battle's won,
Heads up!

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTION

Say, I'll hand it to the Limey
For the way he does his job;
  As a seaman and a scrapper he's a bear.
He don't talk about himself,
Like the average Yankee gob,
  But at doin' things that boy is simply "there."

So the things that I don't savvy,
In the habits of the cuss—
  Well, I lay 'em to his funny limey way,
'Cause underneath his skin,
He's just like any one of us,
  From God's Country in the good old U. S. A.

Yet it jolted me a bit,
When I read a limey log:
  "The Hun was seen at sixteen twenty-three,
So we sounded 'action stations'—
Served an extra tot of rum—
  And the Bos'n piped all hands below to tea!"

THE FLEET INSIDE

CHAPLAIN S. W. MC CLELLAND, U. S. N.

Think of the ships that stay inside,
    Surging about to please the tide;
Never daring to put to sea,
    Shackled like slaves in timidity,
Fearing "The Dragon" that steams outside;
    Pity the ships that skulk inside.

Think of the crews who man that fleet,
    Knowing "Up anchor" must mean defeat;
Scraping the barnacles off the hulls;
    Sharing their days with the Baltic gulls;
Awaiting the death that stalks outside—
    Pity the men that stay inside!

Think of the Admiral, high in command,
    Knowing that ruin awaits his land,
Unless his fleet puts out to sea,
    To fight against Democracy.
He knows "The Dragon" steams outside—
    So pities himself and stays inside!

THE BUNKER PLATE

When Jack hits the beach and gets out of reach
Of the irksome restraint of the navy,
He starts a big hole in his fat pay-day roll
On a course that's decidedly wavy.

As for shillings and pence he hasn't much sense
While florins and crowns get his nanny;
He can't tell a tuppence apart from a thruppence
But his eye for the girls is uncanny.

And when the wee lasses who polish the glasses
Return all the change to our mate,
He has but one penny, left out of his many—
Known to him as the big Bunker Plate.

But Jack strolls along a-singing a song
Of verses without any rhyme;
When he gets back aboard he is minus his hoard,
But, oh, boy! He has had a good time!

THE KILL

In the smoking grey of twilight,
When the tumbling roaring sea,
Breaks aboard the frail destroyer as she drives,
Up aloft on swaying foremast,
There the lookout keeps his watch
On the convoy, with its forty thousand lives.

Port and starboard steam the escort,
  Buried first deep in the trough,
Climbing then upon the face of mountains steep.
Down astern the huge ships follow,
  Turning roaring seas aside—
Steaming eastward, gorged with soldiers—laden
    deep.

THE KILL

Of a sudden, down from windward,
  Comes the screaming warning wail,
Of a siren, and the booming of a gun.
As a towering speeding liner
  Heels far over as she turns,
To evade the two torpedoes of a Hun.

In a flash the escort, turning,
  Speeds full tilt toward the spot,
Where the shells are sending water spouts on high.
As they near, the gun fire ceases,
  But the boiling waters show
That a submarine is sounding there hard by.

Depth bombs drop and dull concussion
  Rocks the surface of the sea;
From the depths the foaming troubled waters boil,
Bringing bits of shattered wreckage,
  Schools of stunned and helpless fish,
And the telltale spreading slick of pungent oil.

Soon a black hulk breaks the surface,
  Then a conning tower appears—
The destroyers turn and speed to the attack.
But a hatch is quickly opened—
  Forms of men come tumbling out,
As the stricken, helpless boat sinks slowly back.

THE KILL

Men are fished from chilly waters,
  Drawn aboard by willing hands,
Warmed and fed by foes who still can play
    the game,
E'en though forty thousand soldiers
  Might have met death at the hands
Of a sneaking, cowardly Hun who knows no
    shame.

Aye, no matter how they foul us,
  We shall keep on fighting clean,
Buoyed up by faith in justice and in right,
For 'twere better far to perish,
  Than to live for many years,
Knowing well you'd won, but fought a dirty
    fight.

THE SWEEPERS

Two little "drifters," stumpy and squat
Towing a sweep between,
Breasting the waves of the wild North Sea,
Their harvest of mines to glean;
Two little sweepers alone in the bay,
Dragging their weary, monotonous way—
The "Annabelle Lucy" and "Mary Sans Souci"
Went out in the channel to-day.

Theirs is the drudgery, work without glory,
Theirs the monotonous life;
Clearing the channel of mines for the fleet,
Their part of the wearisome strife—
Till a dull detonation from over their way,
Sends a column of water—a pillar of spray
And the "Annabelle Lucy" without the "Sans Souci"
Comes back to the harbor to-day.

STORIES FOR OUR SONS

ENSIGN HUTCHISON, U. S. N.

Yes! Daddy knows right well, my lad,
The story of the fleet
That met the Huns off Coney Isle
In Hipper's great defeat.

I served a twelve-inch gun, my lad,
Upon the gallant ARK,
And fought the fight without respite
From early dawn till dark.

We left our base the year before,
And steamed at forty knots,
Until we heard the cry of "smoke"
And saw them there in spots.

Aye, there they were at twenty yards,
A thousand ships in line;
We opened fire when "mess-gear" went
And sank them all by nine.

Yes! Daddy was right there, my lad,
He served a five-inch gun,
And all alone killed Kaiser Bill,
Before the war was won.

THE FLYING-BLOKE

The Flying-Bloke is up aloft,
Sharp against the sky—
Twisting, turning, motor humming,
Mid the clouds on high.

Splendid youth is soaring there,
Cheeks are glowing red,
Shining eyes look keenly out,
For the foe ahead.

Straightway to unequal combat,
Speeds his battle-plane,
Firing quickly, swooping upward,
Diving back again.

Then it halts—a bit uncertain,
Flutt'ring—wheels around,
Drifts into a spinning nose-dive,
Crashes to the ground.

THE FLYING-BLOKE

There's an empty platform waiting,
On the turret bare;
In the mess-room, by the table,
Stands an empty chair.

The Flying-Bloke has fallen,
Like many gallant men,
But his soul will keep on soaring,
Till it finds peace again.

THE COXSWAIN'S LINE

LIEUT. H. E. CRESSMAN, U. S. N.

This is the story the Coxswain told to a bunch of boots in the forward hold.

Shanghaied by a whaler I worked as a sailor,
And fetched up in old Bombay.
After six weeks afloat in an old whaleboat,
That steered like a stack of hay.

I know the shores of the lonely Azores
And the lights of Sidney Head;
Where we lay close hauled and the leadsman called
The depth of the channel's bed.

I've been through the Straights and the Golden Gates,
Mined diamonds for months by the karat;
I've been in Algiers stayed in London for years,
And climed to the top of Mt. Ararat.

I've sailed a ship in the hurricane's grip,
And a rotten old tub was she;
Where we saved our hides and little besides
From a wreck in the old North Sea.

THE COXSWAIN'S LINE

I've seen the Soudan and the heart of Japan,
And I've speckled the Indian Seas,
I've travelled the Highlands; been all through the Islands
And froze in the bleak Pyrenes.

I've been Captain and crew and Bos'n too,
Sailed round the Horn thirty times,
On a ship that was built like a crazy quilt,
With a cargo of liquor and limes.

I served in the Corps in the late Spanish war,
And never once had a rest.
I was shot in the spine and dropped out of line
And died with a ball in my chest.

This is the story the Coxswain told to a bunch of boots in the forward hold.

THE CAPTAIN

Up where the lofty topmast looms
Against the glow of western sky,
Where the jutting bridge is set midway
And gleaming flags of signals fly,
There stands the Captain gazing out
To seaward—sharp and keen of eye.

His grizzled hair against the blue
Of battered cap with rim of gold,
His ruddy cheeks with leathern lines,
His kindly face with features bold,
Are splashed with rain and flying spray
And lashed by stinging Norther cold.

With level head and steady hand
He guides our thirty thousand tons,
His task it is to wield the might
Of throbbing engines, flaming guns
And guard with care the precious lives
Of twice a thousand trusting ones.

For we below who fondly place
    Our lives and fortunes in his care,
So love that weatherbeaten face,
    Those kindly eyes, that grizzled hair,
That we would follow unto death,
    If he it were who led us there.

SING A SONG FOR NAVY

ENSIGN HUTCHINSON, U. S. N.

The Army's taken Thiaucourt
    The Marines won Chateau Thierry
Come give us gobs a little chance,
    We're getting mighty weary

Of lying here and lying there
    Without a sign or rumor
To make us think we'll ever fight—
    Or put us in good humor.

The gobs who followed Farragut
    And shipped with O. H. Perry,
Never hung around like this,
    And kept the lasses merry.

Now all we ask is one small chance
    To send some Huns to Davy,
Come let us tune the turrets up!
    And sing a song for navy.

ASK A BRITISH NAVAL OFFICER

Ask a British Naval Officer to tell you of himself,
And you'll get a change of subject—that is all.
Ask a British Naval Officer to tell about a mate,
And he'll talk you up against the nearest wall.

Now the night the "K-10" tied up to our gangway in a fog,
And we had her skipper over here for tea,
He was yarning of the rigors of the submarine patrol
In the "Bight" and in the stormy Baltic Sea.

Three small H-Boats, so he told us, had a certain rendezvous
Where they waited for their orders to proceed.
On the surface they were drifting, like a flock of sleepy ducks,
And of danger taking not the slightest heed,

When they suddenly discovered that a stranger, bobbing up
Where no one had been the moment just before,
Had increased their aggregation from a cozy little three
To a most unhealthful crowd composed of four.

In the twinkling of an eye-lash diving-rudders jammed down hard,
Motors hummed and in a moment all were gone.
One H-Boat, the more conservative, continued on its way,
But the others stuck around and carried on.

Soon a wary eye projected from the surface of the sea,
Peered about a bit and found another one,
Recognition signals spouted, then two friendly submarines,
Scanned the ocean for the presence of the Hun.

Now our Captain—he who told us—saw ahead and on the bow
One more periscope peep out at him and wait,
So he cruised around before it showing just the faintest feather
To distract attention from his nearby mate.

ASK A BRITISH NAVAL OFFICER

Each one knew the other hostile, one manouvered for a shot,
While our captain made himself a target boat,
Till his friend could get position on the unsuspecting Hun—
The remainder of the story we will quote:

"While the Hun, the shifty beggar, tried to outmanoeuver me
He didn't even sight the little mate,
Who just planted two torpedoes in the rascal's blinkin' hide,
Sending Fritzie to a most distressing fate.

And I thought it was so sporting of my friend to put him down—
You'll admit it was a rather ripping show—
That I got the Force Commander to report it when we moored,
And to recommend him for the D. S. O."

Ask a British Naval Officer to talk about himself,
And you'll get a change of subject—that is all.
Ask a British Naval Officer to talk about his mate
And he'll back you up against the nearest wall.

SCOTLAND FOREVER!

Sandy McNab is the canniest Scot
  Thot iver came oot' th' heather;
The mon is sae thrifty his knees are a' bare,
  No matter how chill is the weather.

When puffin' his pipe, if the baccy he smokes
  Ha' cost 'im a coople o' pence,
He gets nae enjoyment at a' frae th' weed,
  Cause he's worried aboot the expense.

An' if he be smokin' a wee bit o' Jock's
  That he borrowed when Jock never saw,
He rams the old pipe so dom fu' o' the stuff,
  That he can't make the bloomin' thing draw!

CROSSES

A few years ago we didn't think much
About crosses of any old kind.
In the old shallow life with no struggle or strife,
A cross was a hard thing to find.
Perhaps the most frequent of all long ago,
Was the one without glitter or gloss,
That the crook handed out to a pal who was pinched
And known as the old "double cross"

But then came the war with its big decorations
For men who had fought a good fight;
And all of these medals were good things to have,
When awarded for valor or might.
But out of their number one stands all alone,
Along with the dregs and the dross,
Awarded for killing of women and children,
And known as the Hun's Iron Cross.

And there is the emblem awarded to him,
Who dies over there in the battle,
Perhaps it's surmounted by tin-hat or cap,
And accoutrements no more to rattle.
A monument this to him who gave all,
And now lies asleep 'neath the moss,
A fitting reward for the Great Sacrifice—
The soldier boy's own wooden cross.

But out of the fight as it rages and roars,
A Hell running rampant on earth,
There looms up ahead for the living and dead,
A vision we've seen since our birth,
Inspiring us all though we stand or we fall,
To follow nor reckon the loss—
And trust all to Him who gave up His life,
And left us His wonderful Cross.

SCUTTLEBUTT

CHAPLAIN S. W. McCLELLAND, U. S. N.

We're going out from Portland
    We're on our way to Kiel;
We're off to meet the President—
    New dope with every meal.

We put to sea on Sunday—
    No, Monday is the day,
And Brest the destination—
    Or Malta far away!

We'll make New York for Christmas,
    Or reach the Dixie line;
Well—we don't know where we're going,
    But the "scuttlebutt" is fine.

THE MINE FORCE

If life means little more to you,
Than something to be idly risked,
Perhaps the thing for you to do
Is join the Mine Force and be whisked

Up to the northern latitudes
Where men who talk at all of strife,
Must deal in common platitudes
Like sudden death and blighted life.

Up there you'll calmly put to sea
On some converted merchant ship
So loaded down with TNT
And fulminate, on every trip

That if perchance some careless gob
Or other menace unforseen
Like floating mine fields on the job,
Or Fritzie in a submarine,

Should furnish you the sudden jolt
That it requires to detonate
Your cargo, like a thunderbolt,
You'll never even guess your fate.

And when you sew the dragons teeth,
That splash and quickly downward go,
To lurk in silence underneath
The wave, in wait for friend or foe,

Who knows but what some other day,
The seed thus sown by your own hand,
May rise and bump you on your way
To some more peaceful, fairer land?

And worst of all when war is done
And other gobs can homeward sail,
No doubt you'll have to be the one
To steam out in a raging gale

And sweep the bottom of the sea,
For these same bits of fulminate,
And nervous cans of TNT
All primed and cocked to detonate.

And so if life means naught to you—
Or if you really want a thrill,
You'll find that in this service new—
The Mine Force—you will get your fill,

THE MINE FORCE

Up in the northern latitudes
    Where men who speak at all of strife,
Must deal in common platitudes
    Like sudden death and blighted life.

ARMISTICE NIGHT

The Grand Fleet lay in the Firth of Forth,
That great, eventful day,
When the news was flashed around the world,
That the Hun had come to bay,
And signed the blooming armistice,
That took our chance away,
To sink him in the sea some misty morning.

Unlike the folks who lived ashore,
We didn't start to cheer,
But dully read the message,
Which confirmed our growing fear,
That the Hun fleet never would come out
To let us try our gear,
And shoot him full of holes, some misty morning.

And then an old tanker, all covered with grease,
'Gan tooting her siren and spelling out "Peace"
Spitting and steaming,
And howling and screaming,
The racket was heard to the very North Sea.
And the Grand Fleet all smiled,
At the message so wild,
For the signal they heard
Was a comical word:
Spelling "peace" with an "s" instead of a "c"!

Soon thousands of whistles and sirens joined in;
The cheering of sailors and clattering din
Of rollicking folks as they beat upon tin;
The bells were all ringing,
The sailors all singing,
With trumpets and bugles all blaring like sin.

And when shades of night spread over the bay,
A gleaming searchlight projected its ray,
To the heavens—where hundreds of others straightway,
Reached up to the clouds and turned night into day.
Then rockets shot up and burst overhead—
Very-Lights, star-shells and night-signals red,
Sparkling and glowing,
And fading and growing,
The ear-splitting noise might have wakened the dead.

Then up at the mastheads against the black sky,
There swung to the breeze and floated on high,
The flags of the Allies—a light swinging by—
Bathed their folds with its beam till they looked just the same!
As the glowing and flashing bright tongues of a flame.
And then came the roaring
Of mens voices soaring
In full-throated cheering
And joyous acclaim.

Then out from the side of a Yank battleship
A fifty foot boat started out on a trip;
A band was on deck, but the music, I fear,
Might have shattered the drum of a sensitive ear,
It was "Hail, Brothers, Hail! For the Gang is All Here!"
And as they approached the flagship, "Q. E."
And arrived at the spot where the Limeys could see,
The beam of her searchlight swung over their way,
And lighted them up just as clear as the day.
And at the boats stern Old Glory waved freely,
Floating majestically—beautiful—really!
Then up from the British came three rousing cheers,
That swelled in sweet music to listening ears;
While the searchlight beam followed the boat out of sight,
And the next ship in line picked it up with her light.

With such an ovation
The great British nation
Gave Thanks
To the Yanks
For their part in the fight.

The boat passing on to the end of the line,
Found her own "chummy-ship" which she knew by the sign:
"Southampton" in letters writ onto the stern;
And then, close aboard, the boat made a turn
And swung alongside 'mid the welcoming shout
From the Britisher's sailors—the band tumbled out—
Mid welcoming throngs they were caught in a jam
Yet they managed to strike up "Oh, How Dry I Am"
Shades of George Washington! Ghosts of Cornwallis!
Who could have dreamed such a thing would befall us?
Dancing and prancing,
Bandmen all frantic
Officers vieing
To find a new antic—
And yet you will have to admit 'twas romantic!

Glasses were brought and all hands drank a toast
Some to the guests and some to the host;
"Here's to the President! Here's to the King!
Long may they live and now let us sing!"
And so arm in arm and far into the night
They tautened their friendship and promised to fight

ARMISTICE NIGHT

Shoulder to shoulder and firmly to stand—
That freedom and peace might abide on the land.
Till at last came "good bye" over sparkling wine,
When they joined in a circle and sang "Auld Lang Syne."
As the Yankees shoved off at exactly one bell,
They gave their good friends the Annapolis yell;
And shouted "good-by folks, your party was swell!"
While the Limeys agreed they'd enjoyed it as well.
'Mid singing the boat steamed away in the dark;
And made its way back alongside of the ARK.
No doubt the next day they all were a fright,
But who had a care on Armistice Night!

THE SAILOR'S LUCK

You ask me, stranger, why I look
So glum, and grouse a bit,
When the blinkin' war is over,
And you're celebratin' it?
Well, I'll tell you, Yank, I'm fed up,
Disappointed, don't you know,
By the vagaries of fortune,
As they came to Scapa Flow.

Four long years I stayed on duty,
Up on Flotta's dreary face,
On the mine fields at the entrance,
And of leave had not a trace.
There I listened on the gadjet,
Called the deep-mine hydrophone,
That no sub could come a snooping,
Lest its presence there be known.

THE SAILOR'S LUCK

Four long years of tiresome waiting
Without any hostile sound,
Then one night a "fish" came humming
To the nets, and cruised around,
Till the 'phones had nicely plotted,
Her position at the gate,
And a mighty detonation,
Sent old Fritzie to his fate.

Swarms of boats were sent to track him,
Drags soon found him as he lay;
Divers dropped down on his deck plates,
And they heard—so they all say—
Tapping on the inner bottom,
Dots and spaces, sending "Help,"
Or the word a Hun would signal—
Sneakin', dirty, skulkin' whelp!

So they called the divers from him,
Sent a keen destroyer past;
Dropped a heavy "ash-can" on him—
And I guess he breathed his last;
For the divers then reported,
As they towed him off in-shore,
That they couldn't hear the noises,
Of the tapping—any more!

THE SAILOR'S LUCK

Now you ask me why I'm grousing,
And I'll tell you, sir,—why blime—
Shoot me for a blinkin' Hun,
Call me leather-neck or Limey—
If the hard-luck which pursued me,
Bringing all its bloomin' woe,
Didn't give me leave to London,
So I missed the whole damned show!

THE SURRENDER

1. *The Vanquished*

Their dull hulks loom against the gloom
  Of the fog bank's dismal grey,
Their pace so slow we scarcely know
  The ships are under way.

The smoke, dead black, creeps from the stack,
  And hangs as a listless pall:
Black standards drape like funeral crepe
  And death lies over all.

The silent guns of the sullen Huns
  No more their voices use;
Yet mute, acclaim the burning shame
  Of the High Sea Fleet's last cruise.

2. *The Victors*

Our bright sides gleam in the sun's tinged beam
  Where it streams through the morning haze;
The bow waves curl in foaming swirl,
  As we speed our several ways.

The forced draft roars while grey smoke pours,
  And is lost far down alee,
Our colors fly at topmast high—
  Bright flags of victory.

Our guns are manned and ready stand,
  To speak with throats aflame,
To the Cult of Might who dared not fight,
  And would not play the game.

3. *The Faith*

Oh God to Thee, we of the sea
  Give thanks for the wondrous light
That reveals Thy power in this Thine hour,
  The hour of Truth and Right.

PEGGY OF THE PIER

Peggy, a wee, smiling bonnie scotch lass
Who lived at the head of the Pier,
Where it thrust its stone length from the foot
of the bluff
With the Bridge of the Forth towering near,
Owned a novelty shop where she sold to the men,
Who landed from grim fighting craft—
"Penny thrillers," the papers, tobacco and such,
While she jollied and bantered and laughed.

From the Admiral down to the lowest "A. B."
Who stopped at her counter to buy,
All held in respect the wholesome young miss,
With the gleam of a smile in her eye.
And though many had wooed with ardor and
fire,
She mocked them and sent them away,
Till a smart yankee gig swung into the Pier
One sunshiny, sparkling day.

As the bronzed coxswain spun his brass steering
wheel,
And backed smartly up alongside,
'Tis rumored that Peggy glanced softly his way,
And opened her blue eyes so wide,
That she took in the cut of his jib at a glance,
And her heart skipped a flutter or two
At the stranger, who promptly gazed back with
a smile,
Like any good sailor would do.

And in the long months that the big yankee ships
Lay anchored down east of the Pier,
There followed a courtship in true yankee style,
At least that is what we all hear;
'Till Peggy gave in and married the chap,
Thus showing the cordial relations,
'Tween the rank and the file who fight on the
seas,
Defending the great allied nations.

"GOOD-BYE-E-E-E!"

Yankee ships are underway,
Standing out to sea—
British ships escorting them
Colors floating free;
Signals passing ship to ship,
Flash "Good luck and pleasant trip!"
Parting cheers on every lip,
Singing "Good-Bye-e-e-e!"

British ships are turning now,
Standing toward the shore;
Yankee ships are steaming on—
Home-bound pennants soar;
Misty eyes with sorrow gaze;
Thoughts return to happy days;
Friends are lost in distant haze—
Grand Fleet days are o'er.

Yankee thoughts now homeward fly,
Far across the sea;
Christmas in our native land,
Beckons you and me.
Yet our hearts must long retain,
Memories of the message plain,
"Britain wants you back again,
Good-luck and 'Good-Bye-e-e-e'!"

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